

101711Z DEC 89

SUBJECT: REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF
EMBASSY TASK FORCE ON THE JESUIT KILLINGS

2. SUMMARY: ON 4 DECEMBER 1989 AN EMBASSY TASK FORCE WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACT AS A COORDINATING BODY AND FOCAL POINT FOR ALL MISSION INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THE MURDERS OF SIX JESUIT PRIESTS AND TWO OTHER PERSONS ON 16 NOVEMBER 1989. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR CALLED IN FROM MEXICO CITY. [REDACTED] BEGAN THE WEEK INTERVIEWING NUMEROUS PERSONS WHO ARE CONSIDERED IMPORTANT TO THE INVESTIGATION. AMONG THOSE INTERVIEWED WERE ROBERTO D'AUBIUSSON, COLONEL RENE ((PONCE)) AND SEVERAL OFFICERS ON DUTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE CRIME SCENE ON THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS. AS OF 9 DECEMBER 1989 THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES ON A NUMBER OF FRONTS, AND A LACK OF EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES HAS PREVENTED THE INVESTIGATION FROM BEING NARROWED TO SPECIFIC SUSPECT/S.

3. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR, ACCOMPANIED BY THE EMBASSY LEGAL ATTACHE, BEGAN THE INVESTIGATION WITH AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT ALFREDO ((CRISTIANI)). CRISTIANI MADE IT CLEAR HE WANTED THIS CASE CLEARED-UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WOULD COOPERATE IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE. CRISTIANI ALSO REQUESTED THAT THE INVESTIGATION FOCUS FIRST ON THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. HE WANTED THE MILITARY INVESTIGATED FIRST BECAUSE THE PRESS AND CHURCH ARE POINTING THE FINGER IN THAT DIRECTION AND CRISTIANI WANTS THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION CLEARED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ALLOW THEM TO GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF FIGHTING A WAR. CRISTIANI ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT, IF THE INVESTIGATION INDICATED MILITARY OFFICERS WERE INVOLVED, THEY WOULD BE PROSECUTED. THERE WILL BE NO COVER-UP.

4. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR LEDED TO PRESIDENT CRISTIANI'S WISHES AND HAS FOCUSED THE INVESTIGATION ON THE MILITARY. HE INTERVIEWED CHIEF OF STAFF COLONEL RENE ((PONCE)) ON 4 DEC AS WELL, AND RECEIVED PONCE'S ASSURANCES THAT THE MILITARY WOULD COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE INVESTIGATION. PONCE ASKED FOR GUIDANCE/ SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHERE THE ARMY SHOULD BEGIN. UNFORTUNATELY, [REDACTED] HAS OBSERVED THAT TO DATE THERE HAS BEEN NO REAL ANSWER GIVEN TO PONCE ON THIS POINT.

5. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR AND LEGAL ATTACHE INTERVIEWED ALL OF THE UNIT COMMANDERS ON DUTY IN THE AREA OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL AMERICA (UCA) ON THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS. MILITARY DETACHMENTS SIX AND SEVEN HAD SQUADS IN THE AREA AS DID THE TREASURY POLICE. ALL OF THE SQUAD LEADERS FROM DM-6 AND DM-7 REPORTED HEARING THE GUN SHOTS WHICH WERE PROBABLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE KILLINGS OF THE PRIESTS; BUT THEY ALL SAID THEY DID NOT ASSOCIATE THE SHOTS WITH THE UCA CAMPUS, BUT RATHER THOUGHT THERE WAS A FIREFIGHT NEAR THE AREA. THE TREASURY POLICE UNIT

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NOV 1993

6. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR BELIEVES THE MILITARY OFFICERS TOLD THE TRUTH AND WILL BE OF LITTLE USE TO THE INVESTIGATION. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATION UNIT (SIU) SUBSEQUENTLY CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS OF ALL THE MEN POSITIONED NEAR THE UCA ON THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS AND CONCLUDED THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE ANY OF THEM WERE INVOLVED.

8. PERHAPS TRYING TO SHOW HIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE, D'AUBUISSON MADE SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHERE THE INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE DIRECTED. HE SUGGESTED THAT A SPECIAL JUDICIAL REVIEW BOARD (SIMILAR TO A U.S. GRAND JURY) BE ESTABLISHED TO QUESTION WITNESS AND PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT SOMETHING WAS BEING DONE TO SOLVE THIS CASE. WHEN THE INVESTIGATOR AND LEGAL ATTACHE AGREED THIS WOULD BE USEFUL D'AUBUISSON IMMEDIATELY CALLED THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND LITERALLY ORDERED HIM TO ESTABLISH THE REVIEW BOARD. IN RETROSPECT THIS WAS PROBABLY A PLOY ON D'AUBUISSON'S PART TO IMPRESS HIS AUDIENCE. THIS IS THE IMPRESSION BECAUSE, AS OF THIS WRITING, THE REVIEW BOARD IS NOT EVEN ESTABLISHED, MUCH LESS FUNCTIONING.

10. ON 7 DECEMBER D'AUBUISSON CALLED THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR AND REQUESTED A PRIVATE MEETING. AT THE MEETING, D'AUBUISSON SAID THAT HE HEARD FROM A SOURCE WITHIN THE SALVADORAN AIR FORCE (FAES) THAT FAES GENERAL JUAN RAFAEL ((BUSTILLO)) MAY HAVE HAD A PART IN THE MURDERS OF THE JESUITS. D'AUBUISSON SAID BUSTILLO SPOKE TO HIS SENIOR OFFICERS THE DAY BEFORE THE MURDERS AND STATED AT THAT

11. D'AUBUISSON'S MOTIVES FOR GIVING UP THIS INFORMATION ARE VERY SUSPICIOUS TO SAY THE LEAST. SEVERAL QUESTIONS ARISE AS TO WHY D'AUBUISSON GAVE THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR THIS INFORMATION. FIRST, AND FOREMOST, IS THE QUESTION OF WHY D'AUBUISSON WOULD "RAT" ON GENERAL BUSTILLO WHEN BUSTILLO IS SEEN AS A D'AUBUISSON MAN. IT IS NO SECRET IN THE MILITARY THAT D'AUBUISSON ADVOCATED BUSTILLO FOR THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE POSITION OVER GENERAL LARIOS. ALSO, LEIVA IS KNOWN TO BE OUT OF FAVOR AT THIS TIME, AND JUST RECENTLY WAS REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION AS FAES S-2. BECAUSE OF THESE QUESTIONS AND THE

12. AS THE WEEK DREW TO A CLOSE A SENSE OF FRUSTRATION SET IN: THE CHURCH IS OBSTRUCTING THE INVESTIGATION, EYE WITNESSES ARE NOW WHERE TO BE FOUND AND THERE IS PRECIOUS LITTLE IN THE WAY OF PHYSICAL EVIDENCE. ADD TO THIS A LACK OF A SPECIFIC MOTIVE FOR THE KILLINGS AND AN INVESTIGATION THAT HAS NOT DEVELOPED ANY LEADS WHICH COULD NARROW THE INVESTIGATION TO A SPECIFIC GROUP. ALTHOUGH THE INVESTIGATION IS STILL YOUNG, TIME WILL WORK AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, AND POLITICAL PRESSURE WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE.

14. [REDACTED] HAS TASKED [REDACTED] b6
[REDACTED] b7C CONTACTS TO DEVELOP INFORMATION
AND/OR LEADS WHICH WOULD BE USEFUL TO THE INVESTIGATION. [REDACTED] b6 b7C

FEELING IS THAT BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MILITARY SINCERELY WANT TO SOLVE THIS CRIME, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THE FACT U.S. AID COULD BE ENDANGERED IF THERE IS A COVER-UP.